



City of Helena

CITY-COUNTY PARKS ADVISORY BOARD SUMMARY Wednesday, March 1, 2017



City Members

- ☐ Pat Doyle *excused*
- ☒ Ross Johnson
- ☒ Steve Baiamonte

County Members

- ☒ Dave Payne
- ☐ Ken Wallace
- ☐ Ernie Lundberg (Lincoln Parks Board) *excused*

Joint Member

- ☐ Kalli Kind, School District Representative

Commission Representatives

- ☒ Rob Farris-Olsen, City Commissioner
- ☐ Jim McCormick, County Commissioner *excused*

Staff Contact

- ☒ Matt Heimel, Lewis and Clark County Special Districts Planner
- ☒ Amy Teegarden, Parks and Recreation Director
- ☒ Craig Marr, Parks Superintendent
- ☒ Todd Wheeler, Recreation and Aquatics Program Manager
- ☒ Lydia Sakowski, VISTA Volunteer
- ☒ Jennifer Schade, Recorder

LOCATION: City-County Building, Room 426

TIME: 11:30 am – 1:00 pm

Visitor(s): Gary Dalton, Al Knauber, Karen Lane, Mike Magee, Pat Marron, Greg McNally, Lydia Sakowski, Stacy Sommer

1. Call to Order

Dave Payne called the City-County Parks Board meeting to order at 11:32 am.

2. Establish Quorum/Introductions/Review Agenda/Approval of Minutes

- A quorum was not established.
- There were no additions to the Agenda.
- Approval of: February 1, 2017 Minutes
 - We will defer approval of the February 1st minutes to the April meeting.

3. Comments from Persons Present

The board will accept brief comments from the public for items that are not on the agenda at this time.

- None.

4. Unfinished Business

Parks Report – Amy and Cory

- Cory was not available for this meeting; however, he did send the statistics to Jennifer.

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- We started doing this last May so we almost have a full year of statistics. It will be interesting to look at the trends. The real value of this process is yet to come.
- Jennifer was instructed to remove Sherron Park from the report as this is not a city or county park.

Indoor Recreation Facility Update – HRSA - Todd

- They are wrapping up feasibility study.
- Next phase – as part of their grant, they are required to do an economic impact assessment. They have identified a consulting firm that can do that study.
- They are thinking about location and what entity would be provider of said facility.

5. Presentations/Discussion Items

Active Living Wayfinding Sign Plan – Karen Lane, L & C County Public Health

- The Greater Helena area hosts an extensive biking and hiking trail system as well as the beautiful vistas and breathtaking views that make those tough climbs worth the effort. Not all residents, however, are able to access trails—and not all residents think of using the trail system when it comes to daily commuting or errand running. According to the American Community Survey Report 2009-2013 average, only 4.3 percent and 1.6 percent of workers walk or bike to work. But, if the right resources were available, nearly 60 percent of workers indicated that they would give active transportation a try.
- The American Planning Association and the American Public Health Association funded our community (1 of 13 in the country and the only city in Montana) to create the wayfinding system.
- We have had audits and updates to our long range transportation system plan, ADA assessments, road policy revisions, and facilities audits for the school system. Many of the audits called for a unified wayfinding system.
- Wayfinding is more than just signs telling you which way to turn or where you are on the trail. Wayfinding is about creating community and connectivity, making amenities, like parks and trails, accessible to residents regardless of ability.
- Project strategies have included hosting community design workshops and walk audits training.
- They had many series of assessments including the Community Health Inclusion Index CHII. The coalition did 13 surveys. Information from these surveys will be compiled and reported.
- Stakeholder interviews performed included: the MT Department of Transportation, Helena BID, Helena Tourism Alliance, and Parks and Recreation.
- Next steps:
 1. Reviewing draft plan and providing feedback to be completed in late March.
 2. We will obtain technical assistance from the app developer to make signs readable by the community.
- Parks has committed to be part of the demo project. We will place signs at open space trailheads as well as using mile markers at Centennial Trail. There will also be signage placed at the 6th Ward Garden Park.
- For more information about this project, please go to: <http://plan4health.us/wayfinding-in-greater-helena-montana/>.

6. Action Items

- Canyon Ridge Subdivision, Parkland Improvements Proposal Action Item – Greg McNally

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- Greg McNally reviewed the initial request: The Subdivider (T&M Planning Group) for the Canyon Ridge Subdivision, Phases I-III has requested \$16,034.67 in funding from the Southeast Valley Park Development Fund to install a an irrigation system, spread topsoil and install sod in a 0.5 acre portion of the 5.14 acre County Park dedicated in Phase I (Lot No. 125 of Canyon Ridge Subdivision, Phase I). In total, these improvements are estimated to cost \$25,310. A total of \$10,438 has already been spent by the Subdivider for a well, well pump, and electric utility services for the well pump. The requested use of the \$16,034.67 is meant to supplement the total costs associated with the Subdivider's remaining planned improvements proposed to begin around April 15, 2017.
- Mike McGee was representing T & M Planning Group. Mike and Greg presented their proposal to include a planning services agreement task order form.
- After presenting the material provided, possible actions include:
 1. Approve the requested expenditure of all or a portion of the requested funds from the Southeast Valley Park Development Fund; or
 2. Deny the requested expenditure from the Southeast Valley Park Development Fund; or
 3. Request additional information from the Sub-divider and/or County Staff prior to making a decision.
- Ross expressed concern about the lack of access to the public.
- Dave agreed and said that perhaps we can approve the funding with the stipulation that signage is placed indicating access to the public.
- **Because there wasn't a quorum at this meeting, Dave recommended that we review this action item over the next few weeks and add this item to our agenda for a vote in April.**
- Greg stated he will attend the April meeting to answer questions/concerns. He will also provide an update on a timeline for completion of the project.

7. Reports

City	Amy Teegarden	Parks	Craig Marr
County	Matt Heimel	Fair Board	Pat Doyle
HOLMAC	Dave Payne	Playgrounds	Stacy Sommer
Lincoln Parks Board	Ernie Lundberg	School District	Kalli Kind
Recreation	Todd Wheeler	VISTA	Lydia Sakowski

City Parks Report – Amy

- Amy gave an update on feedback received regarding the Fire Tower. After the presentation at the parks board meeting, there was an article in the newspaper regarding the use of a demolition permit. While much of the public supported our efforts, Amy has met with the Historic Preservation community and is trying to understand their concerns. They believe there are other alternatives besides restoring and replacing the Fire Tower. We have given them the opportunity to provide recommendations to the city that need to be supported by engineering analysis that is approved by a professional engineer.
- The city approach to restoration is to make sure we have a Fire Tower in the next 100 years without continually having to reinvest. We also must make certain that we meet building code standards. We do understand the necessity for maintenance.
- We continue to work with community development for other options.

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- We also need to remember if we don't do anything, there could be potential risks to the public. Even though there is a fence around tower, that doesn't limit access.
- Amy will allow the historic preservation community to provide recommendations to us and then we will see where we go from there.
- Dave then asked what the next step would be if they do come back with a unified proposal. Per Amy – anything we do for restoration will still require a demolition permit so there will be that process.
- The other item Amy would like to report on is conversations with the county and George Thebarger. He has informed Amy that the county will be looking at doing a new comprehensive county parks plan in the near future. Amy believes that maybe the city and county should look at parallel planning effort.
- The city's comprehensive park plan was first done in 1998 with an internal revision update in 2009. There haven't been any revisions since 2009. Amy is proposing that the city put money into our budget to work with county in this planning effort that would produce two separate plans, but utilize one consultant. We can look at shared opportunities that make sense. This recommendation will be included in this year's budget plan.
- We are in the process of preparing our budgets for FY18. Staff and the city manager will present the budgets as a draft to the city commission who will ultimately approve the budget in late June.
- The parks department and pool use fee resolutions were approved at the public hearing on March 13.
- Lastly, Amy and Craig have had many conversations with Kali Kind regarding Ramey Park. Ramey Park is on school land. We had an agreement in place in the mid-90's which allowed the city to invest in and maintain a park even though this property is most used by the school. We are recommending that the school takes over maintenance of Ramey Park. The city in turn will not charge the school district for maintenance at Northwest Park. Amy is preparing a resolution for this.

County Parks Report – Greg

- Greg reiterated that the county does have a desire to proceed forward with a comprehensive parks plan. While unsure of the timeline, George indicated that he would like to get the process going in late summer or early fall.

HOLMAC Report – Dave

- No report.

Recreation Report – Todd

- We had a good year at the ice rink. There were approximately 4,600 in attendance. Our revenue was just shy of \$8,000. We matched our best year.
- We are moving forward with the recreation software. We hope to have it in place by April 1st.
- Todd is accepting applications for spring / summer pool staff, Kay's Kids staff, and recreation program staff.

Parks Maintenance Report – Craig

- Craig stated we have had sever requests for field use; so much so that we can't accommodate everyone without degrading turf areas. We have scheduled maintenance days and scheduled a full two weeks in Centennial and Northwest and to allow for turf rest.
- Pat has been attending training in parks maintenance
- We have been preparing work plans for spring.

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- We are looking to refurbish the creek that goes through the walking mall.
- We will have increased efforts in Performance Square.
- We have many ADA items to address.
- The maintenance is recruiting for ¾ time and seasonal positions.
- Urban forestry is getting geared up for another busy season.

Playable Playgrounds Report – Stacy

- Stacy announced the following upcoming events:
 - Royal Princess Tea - March 12th.
 - Zombie Prom - April 28.
 - Super Hero Party - May 12.
 - Father Daughter Ball - June 9.

VISTA Volunteer Report – Lydia

- Amy asked Jennifer to add Lydia to our agenda.
- Lydia stated she has been working on a survey to distribute to the 6th Ward Advisory Coalition. One of the things she has been tasked with is assessing the current functionality of the coalition and how to move forward.
 - We are in the process of building a new website using a program called Squarespace. We are hoping it will be more user friendly making it easier to find things.

8. Communications and Future Agenda Items (Board Members)

9. Next Meeting Date: April 5, 2017

10. Adjournment

With no further business, the City-County Parks Board meeting adjourned at 12:23 pm.

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